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Richardson Announces Continued Retirement Benefits for Workers at Closure Sites

Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson today announced his commitment to continue retirement benefits for over 7,000 workers at Department of Energy (DOE) closure sites. This announcement affirms the department's support of those who participated in our nation's defense, and those who are performing a crucial role in safely cleaning up the legacy of the Cold War.

"This is the right thing to do for the people who served our nation in the nuclear weapons industries, and who are now helping us safely close down these sites," Richardson said. "These actions will help ensure that workers get the benefits they deserve."

Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management Carolyn Huntoon, this week issued a memorandum clarifying existing DOE policies on retirement benefits at DOE closure sites. The memo affirms that the Energy Department is committed to maintaining health benefits at levels that will generally be consistent with the benefits in existence at closure.

The issue of post closure site benefits has been of greatest concern to workers at the department's Rocky Flats, Fernald and Mound sites because the cleanup job will be completed by 2010 or sooner.

A more comprehensive policy on benefits for all DOE contract workers is being developed and is targeted for release before the end of this calendar year.

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